PROLOGUE

To His *ROYAL HIGHNESS*,

Upon His firſt appearance at the *DUKE'S THEATRE* ſince his Return from *SCOTLAND.*

Written by Mr. Dryden. *Spoken by Mr.* Smith.

IN thoſe cold Regions which no Summers chear,
When brooding darkneſs covers half the year,
To hollow Caves the ſhivering Natives go;
Bears range abroad, and hunt in tracks of Snow:
But when the tedious Twilight wears away,
And Stars grow paler at th' approach of Day,
The longing Crowds to frozen Mountains run,
Happy who firſt can ſee the glimmering Sun!
The ſurly Salvage Off-ſpring diſappear;
And curſe the bright Succeſſour of the Year.
Yet, though rough Bears in Covert ſeek defence,
White Foxes ſtay, with ſeeming Innocence:
That crafty kind with day-light can diſpenſe.
Still we are throng'd ſo full with *Reynard*'s race,
That Loyal Subjects ſcarce can find a place:
Thus modeſt Truth is caſt behind the Crowd:
Truth ſpeaks too Low; Hypocriſie too Loud.
Let 'em be firſt, to flatter in ſucceſs;
Duty can ſtay; but Guilt has need to preſs.
Once, when true Zeal the Sons of God did call,
To make their ſolemn ſhow at Heaven's *White-hall*,
The fawning Devil appear'd among the reſt,
And made as good a Courtier as the beſt.
The Friends of *Job*, who rail'd at him before,
Came Cap in hand when he had three times more.
Yet, late Repentance may, perhaps, be true;
Kings can forgive if Rebels can but ſue:
A Tyrant's Pow'r in rigour is expreſt:
The Father yearns in the true Prince's Breaſt.
We grant an Ore'grown Whig no grace can mend;
But moſt are Babes, that know not they offend.
The Crowd, to reſtleſs motion ſtill enclin'd,
Are Clouds, that rack according to the Wind.
Driv'n by their Chiefs they ſtorms of Hail-ſtones pour:
Then mourn, and ſoften to a ſilent ſhowre.
O welcome to this much offending Land
The Prince that brings forgiveneſs in his hand!
Thus Angels on glad Meſſages appear:
Their firſt Salute commands us not to fear:
Thus Heav'n, that cou'd conſtrain us to obey,
(With rev'rence if we might preſume to ſay,)
Seems to relax the rights of Sov'reign ſway:
Permits to Man the choice of Good and Ill;
And makes us Happy by our own Free-will.

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